

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

Focused on Excellence—Putting Veterans First

Annual Report 2017



Message from the Director



It is a privilege to share the 2017 Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center Annual Report with you. I hope you will enjoy reading this report that highlights our dedicated employees and volunteers, positive culture, quality of care, and stewardship.


Our employees and volunteers are at the heart of successfully fulfilling our mission of providing exceptional healthcare and our vision of being “*Focused on Excellence, Putting Veterans First.*” They are the reason that we are a 5-Star facility and ranked tenth in the nation for overall quality of care, fifth for quality of care in our Community Living Center, and second overall in patient satisfaction.

In 2017, we began focusing on the VA’s top five priorities: Greater Choice, Modernize Systems, Efficiency, Improve Timeliness and Suicide Prevention. Here

at our VA medical center we continued to focus on Veterans’ access to VA healthcare by expanding same day clinical appointments and direct scheduling of specialty care appointments without a referral. In keeping with VA’s top clinical priority, Suicide Prevention, we have made urgent mental health care available for Veterans with Other Than Honorable discharge who would otherwise not be eligible for this benefit.

Notably, the foundation of everything we do is our ICARE core values – *Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence.*

On behalf of the men and women of the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center and its seven Community Outpatient Clinics, it is an honor to care for those who have served.


James W. Rice
Medical Center Director



About Us

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is one of the smallest VA Medical Centers in the nation yet has one of the largest geographic patient service areas east of the Mississippi River, encompassing fifteen Michigan counties and nine counties in northeastern Wisconsin. OGJVAMC and its Community Based Outpatient Clinics annually serve 20,000 Veterans, over 96 percent of whom are living in rural or highly rural areas making the facility the most rural VA Medical Center in the nation.

OGJVAMC is a primary and secondary level care facility with 17 acute care beds. The main facility has an Urgent Care Center and a surgical department with Basic Ambulatory Surgery designation. For higher level emergency and specialty care services OGJVAMC coordinates that care with hospitals in both the local community and at larger VA medical centers that have the capability and expertise to serve our Veterans.

OGJVAMC provides ambulatory and acute health care including audiology, diabetes, dentistry, ear/nose/throat (ENT), geriatrics and extended care, general medicine, Hepatitis C, home-based primary care, mental health, neurology, oncology, op-

tometry, orthopedics, palliative/hospice, physical and occupational therapy, prosthetics, podiatry, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), psychiatry, radiology, speech, spinal cord injury (SCI), substance abuse, surgery, urology, weight management, and women's wellness.

The services provided by OGJVAMC's 40-bed Community Living Center (CLC) include extended care and short term rehabilitation, geriatric care, general nursing home care; short term wound care, and hospice/palliative care.



A Five-Star VA Healthcare System*

Quality - Overall VAMC	Ranked 10 th
Quality - CLC**	Ranked 5 th
Efficiency	Ranked 22 nd
Best place to work	Ranked 6 th
Employee Satisfaction	Ranked 2 nd
Patient Satisfaction	Ranked 2 nd

* Out of 128 VAMCs with inpatient beds (FY17, Q3)

** Out of 135 Community Living Centers (FY17, Q3)

Five Pillars of OGJVAMC

People

Veterans, advocates, employees, volunteers, trainees, and vendors united by a common purpose of providing health care for our nation's heroes.

Quality

Dedicated to continuous improvement and striving to achieve a recognizable degree of excellence in health care.

Service Experience

Daily efforts contributing to the welfare of our Veterans and one another, and focused on providing the best patient experience possible.

Partnerships

Building bridges and creating new endeavors with internal and external stakeholders, and soliciting their feedback to ensure our Veterans are provided the right care, at the right time, in the right place for the right cost.

Stewardship

We are committed to responsible shepherding of OGJVAMC's assets and financial resources.

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People

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Partnerships

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Our Mission:

Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional healthcare that improves their health and well-being.

Our Vision:

Leaders in Rural Healthcare - Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.

Stewardship

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Our Legacy: 67 Years of Serving Veterans

With many Veterans returning home from World War II with injuries, Iron Mountain, MI, was chosen in 1945 by the Veterans Administration as a site for one of the 100 new VA hospitals being built.

On March 14, 1948, construction began on 31.5 acres that had once been the site for a large sawmill and lumberyard. At a cost of \$6.5 million, it was the largest building project ever to date in the Upper Peninsula. The six-story, 265-bed hospital with 360 staff was dedicated on March 5, 1950.

The first expansion of services came in 1975 when the Nursing Home Care Unit was opened to provide long-term care.

The 1990s saw major changes at the Iron Mountain VA Hospital. With the VA's shift from inpatient to outpatient services, a new 16,000 square foot ambulatory care addition was completed in August of 1997, which provided increased primary care space and improved outpatient services. This project represented the first major construction at the Iron Mountain facility since 1950.

The shift to outpatient services also necessitated primary care clinics closer to Veterans. In 1993, the first VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) was opened in Marquette, Michigan, followed by five more

Michigan-based CBOCs in Sault Sainte Marie (1997), Hancock (1997), Menominee (1998), Ironwood (1999), and Manistique (2009), as well as one in Rhinelander, Wisconsin (1998).

More changes came within the last 10 years. A brand new addition housing the 40-bed Community Living Center was opened on April 14, 2008, replacing the Nursing Home Care Unit.

On October 1, 2008, the VA Medical Center was renamed the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center (OGJVAMC) to honor a local WWII Veteran and Medal of Honor recipient. Mr. Johnson was a Foster City, MI, native who was honored for singlehandedly repelling six major counterattacks in the mountains of Italy in 1944.

In June of 2012, OGJVAMC finished a \$6.5 million construction project that completely remodeled the Primary Care Outpatient Clinic and the Urgent Care Clinic on the first floor and added a second floor for specialty care clinics.

On May 25, 2013, the front circle drive was renamed the James D. Priestap Drive in honor of Sergeant First Class Priestap who was killed by a sniper's bullet in Iraq on Thanksgiving Day 2006. He was a OGJVAMC Police Officer at the time of his deployment.

Today, OGJVAMC has 57 beds, employs 694 people at its main campus and CBOCs, and provides primary, specialty and inpatient care to approximately 20,000 Veterans each year.



VA's Top 5 Priorities

Former VA Secretary David Shulkin had indicated that the Department of Veterans Affairs will continue its transformation into an organization that delivers an excellent customer experience. His vision for VA becoming truly Veteran-centric will occur by "...building trust with Veterans and the American people by modernizing VA." This has been articulated in the current VA strategic plan, which includes the VA's top five priorities:

Greater Choice



Providing our Veterans and dependents with helpful, easy to understand information on wait times, patient satisfaction, and quality for VA facilities so they can make informed decisions through VA's Access to Care website:

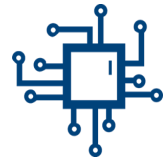
<https://www.accesstocare.va.gov/>.

Improve Timeliness



Improving timeliness in serving our Veterans including propagating online healthcare applications, providing same day clinical services (*see page 16*), purchasing more care in the community, and modernizing the claims appeals process.

Modernizing Our Systems



Replacing outdated electronic medical records, leveraging cloud-based solutions, improving the application process for state-owned Veteran nursing homes, and utilizing new technologies such as providing Veterans with online scheduling options.

Focus Our Resources More Efficiently



Focusing our resources more efficiently by realigning our budget to focus on our foundational services, enhancing our VA/DOD/Community coordination, and utilizing more public-private infrastructure projects.

Suicide Prevention



Suicide Prevention is VA's top clinical priority. On average twenty Veterans commit suicide each day, and fourteen of those are not seen by VA. Partnering with employees, Veterans, families and community partners is a priority. VA cannot do it alone (*see page 22*).

Our Patient Centered Care in Action

What our Veterans and their families are saying about our *Patient Centered Care* demonstrated by our employees and volunteers in 2017:

"The way he was treated at your facility was so far superior to anything I had ever seen. His care was phenomenal and your staff was fantastic!"

"God bless the people that work here!! The nurses, doctors, and staff have been nothing but caring and professional with my mom's care. The customer service I received does make a huge difference. THANK YOU"

"Well organized, efficient, clean and not to mention very friendly staff."

"I wanted to let you know how fantastic the care was that I received from your Urgent Care crew. Everything was handled very professionally, timely and was the best care I have received anywhere."

"My father-in-law received care at the Iron Mountain VA Medical Center for the past 16 years. It became like a second family to him"

"A genuine and sincere thanks you for all that I received during my hospitalization earlier this month. The care was great. You were far more patient with me than I was with myself. Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!!!"

"Where do you find people like this that care so much and make a person's last weeks, and their family's, so much more human?"

"We just could not ask for better service. Thank you all for the amazing team work that you displayed while assisting my husband and for the services provided."

"Veterans are lucky to have professionals like yourself to help us."

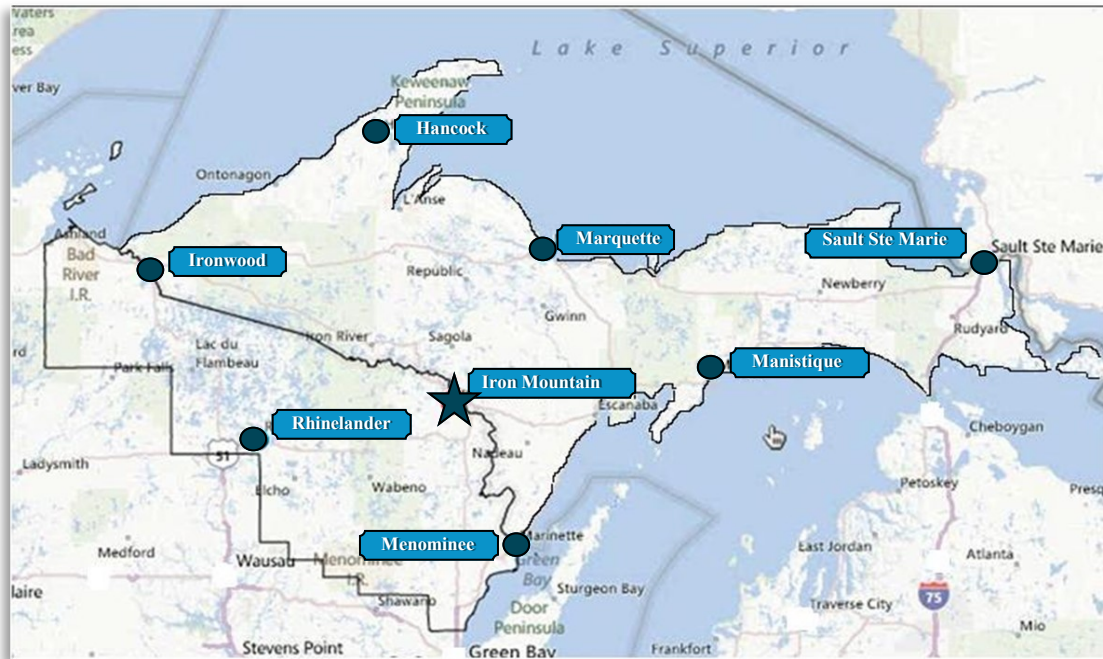
"My husband had wonderful care while he was at the Iron Mountain VA. Everyone was great including the cleaning people to the nurses, doctors, aides and even the canteen."

I do not feel like a number when I'm at my CBOC or at the Iron Mountain VA. I have always had a positive experience.

"Our heartfelt thank you to everyone for making our stay as pleasant as possible. We know our dad received the best of care."

"At my appointment today, the staff were the best ever, compared to any hospital I have ever been in. I just can't get over how nice they were and more importantly, PROFESSIONAL."

Our Locations



Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center

325 East H Street
Iron Mountain, MI 49870
(906) 774-3300

Outpatient Visits: 151,408
Veterans Served: 19,970



Hancock VA Community Outpatient Clinic

787 Market Street, Suite 9
Hancock, MI 49930
(906) 482-7762

Outpatient Visits: 11,339
Veterans Served: 1,924



Ironwood VA Community Outpatient Clinic

629 West Cloverland Drive, Suite 1
Ironwood, MI 49938
(906) 932-0032

Outpatient Visits: 5,725
Veterans Served: 1,890

Manistique VA Outpatient Clinic (Mon-Thu)

813 East Lakeshore Drive
Manistique, MI 49854
(906) 341-3420

Outpatient Visits: 2,415
Veterans Served: 591



Marquette VA Outpatient Clinic

1414 West Fair Avenue, Suite 285
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 226-4618

Outpatient Visits: 14,655
Veterans Served: 3,100



Menominee VA Outpatient Clinic

1110 10th Avenue, Suite 101
Menominee, MI 49858
(906) 863-1286

Outpatient Visits: 7,580
Veterans Served: 1,898



Rhineland VA Outpatient Clinic

639 West Kemp Street
Rhineland, WI 54501
(715) 362-4080

Outpatient Visits: 15,327
Veterans Served: 3,495



Sault Ste. Marie VA Outpatient Clinic

509 Osborn Boulevard, Suite 306
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 253-9383

Outpatient Visits: 6,519
Veterans Served: 1,247



Our Most Valuable Resource

The honors and accreditations on page 14, patient satisfaction scores on page 15, and clinical measures throughout this report would not be possible without our most valuable resource – **PEOPLE**. These honors and achievements are a testament to our OGJVAMC employees – from clinical providers to housekeepers - and our

volunteers who live our ICARE values every day in serving our Veterans and fulfilling our motto, "*Focused on Excellence - Putting Veterans First.*" Additionally, our employees are on the front lines initiating new ideas to improve Veteran care (*page 12*) and implementing new innovative healthcare access programs (*page 16*).



Our employees are on the frontlines of initiating new ideas to improve Veteran care. . .

Our Employees Helping the Community

VA employees from OGVAMC and its seven community based outpatient clinics are active in their communities individually, through the OGJ Employee Association, and established federal and local community programs, such as VA2K Walk for Homeless Veterans, Feds Feeds Families, Combined Federal Campaign, delivering Thanksgiving meals to needy families, and Adopt-a-Family during the holidays.



VA2K Walk for Veteran Homelessness:
OGJAMC was recognized for the highest participation for VA facilities 500-999 employees.



Feds Feeds Family Drive:
OGJAMC employees collected 1,577 pounds of food in 2017 and donated to the Caring House and Salvation Army.



Combined Federal Campaign:
OGJAMC employees raised \$32,759 in FY2017 for the charities of their choice to help people in the community.

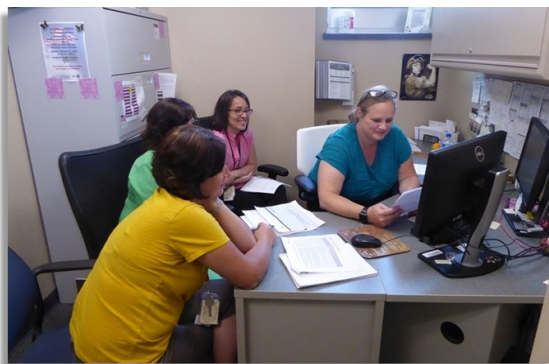


Adopt-a-Family Program:
OGJAMC employees purchased gifts and delivered holiday cheer to 13 area families, including 43 children.

VA employees from OGVAMC and its seven community based outpatient clinics are active in their communities. . .

OGJVAMC Finalist in Shark Tank Contest

In 2017, OGJVAMC employees submitted a number of innovative ideas to the third annual “Shark Tank” competition sponsored by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Inspired by ABC’s reality TV show Shark Tank, VHA created a competition to identify best practices developed in the field and disseminate them across VA.



Barb Robinson, RN (right), presented her innovative Shark Tank idea virtually to a national panel of “Sharks.” With her is the team that worked with her (front to back): Shannon Suheski, RN, Lynda Roell, HT (Dickinson County Health System) and Dana Michaud, RN.

There were 356 Shark Tank submissions from which 100 semi-finalists and then 19 finalists were selected.

Veteran Integrated Service Network (VISN) 12 led all VISNs with 40 Shark Tank entries, and OGJVAMC led all VISN12 facilities with 10 entries (see below). Three of these submissions were selected as semi-finalists:

- Additional Imaging for Bi-Rads Category 0 Mammogram Screening,
- Inpatient/Discharge Treatment for Tobacco and/or other Substance Use Disorders,
- Ethics Consult Recording & Integrating Notification System.

Barbara Robinson, RN, Woman Veterans Program Manager, was one of the 19 finalists. On June 13, 2017, she presented her best practice to provide efficient care coordination with community health care partners for mammograms to a national panel of “Sharks.” Although her submission did not make the final top 10, her best practice received a strong bid.

OGJVAMC Best Practice “Shark” Submission	Submitted By	Finalist
Teams Enhancing VA Community Care	Sarah Buckley, RN	
Palliative Care in Home Based Primary Care	Mary Bertucci, LMSW	
Reducing the use of Benzodiazepines in the Dementia/Neurocognitive Disorder Outpatient Population	Katy Zeier, PharmD, BCPP	
Home Based Primary Care Admission Process Improvement	Terry Kennemore, PT	
Equipment Scanning System	Dale Huppert	
Urgent Care Critical Result Turnaround Time	Stephen Richey, MT	
Improving the Process for Scheduling Additional Imaging for Bi-Rads Category 0 Mammogram Screening	Barbara Robinson, RN	Finalist
Continuous Positive Air Pressure (CPAP) Education and Interdisciplinary Services Care Coordination	James Zeigler	
Inpatient/Discharge Treatment for Tobacco and/or Other Substance Use Disorders	Mary Beth Bezotte, RN	Semi-Finalist
Ethics Consult Recording & Integrated Notification System (E.R.I.N.S.)	Erin Humpula, RN	Semi-Finalist

Inspired by ABC’s reality TV show Shark Tank, VHA created a competition to identify best practices developed in the field. . .

Our Volunteers are a Force Multiplier

OGJVAMC volunteers are a force multiplier, providing 31,881 hours of service in 2017, which is the equivalent of about 15 full-time employees.

These volunteers provide invaluable support to program areas such as Recreation Therapy, Nursing and Patient Care, Outpatient, Chaplain Service, Pharmacy, Human Resources, Voluntary Service, Veteran Transportation, Pet Therapy, Volunteer Escorts, and Butterfly Wish Program.

The 98 volunteer drivers in the Veterans Transportation Network logged 231,461 miles transporting 2,005 Veterans to and from their VA appointments.

Volunteers have been instrumental in conducting over 30 special events, outings, and ceremonies for the benefit of Veteran patients. These include the annual Patient Carnival, Memorial Day Tribute Ride,



Holiday Gift Shop, VA2K Walk, Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, and numerous activities and outings for the CLC residents.

For more information on volunteering:
www.ironmountain.va.gov/giving



2017 OGJVAMC Volunteers

- 392 Volunteers
- 17 Youth Volunteers
- 31,881 Hours served
- 15 Equivalent full time employees
- 231,461 Miles driven by 93 volunteers transporting 2,005 Veterans.
- \$202,631 in total donations (monetary, gift-in-kind & activity)

Volunteers are a force multiplier, providing 31,800 hours of service in 2017, which is the equivalent of 15 full-time employees.



Our Services Recognized



Quality & Efficiency of Overall VA Medical Center

Ranked 10th of 128 VAMCs

Ranked 22nd in Efficiency of 128 VAMCs



Quality of the Community Living Center

Ranked 5th of 135 Community Living Centers

OGJVAMC ended FY2017 as a 5-star facility for quality of the overall VA Medical Center (ranked 6th) and quality of the Community Living Center (ranked 10th) and ranked 22nd in efficiency among all VA Medical Centers per the Strategic Analysis for Improvement and Learning (SAIL).



Best Place to Work

Ranked 6th of 128 VAMCs

OGJVAMC was identified as the 6th best place to work among all facilities in the Veterans Health Administration in 2017 per VA's All Employee Survey and Strategic Analytics for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) Program.



Accreditations

The Joint Commission

OGJVAMC received accreditation from The Joint Commission for the Hospital, Home Care Program, Behavioral Health Care Program, and Long Term Care Program. The Joint Commission is the leading accreditor of health care organizations in America.

Accreditation from College of American Pathologists

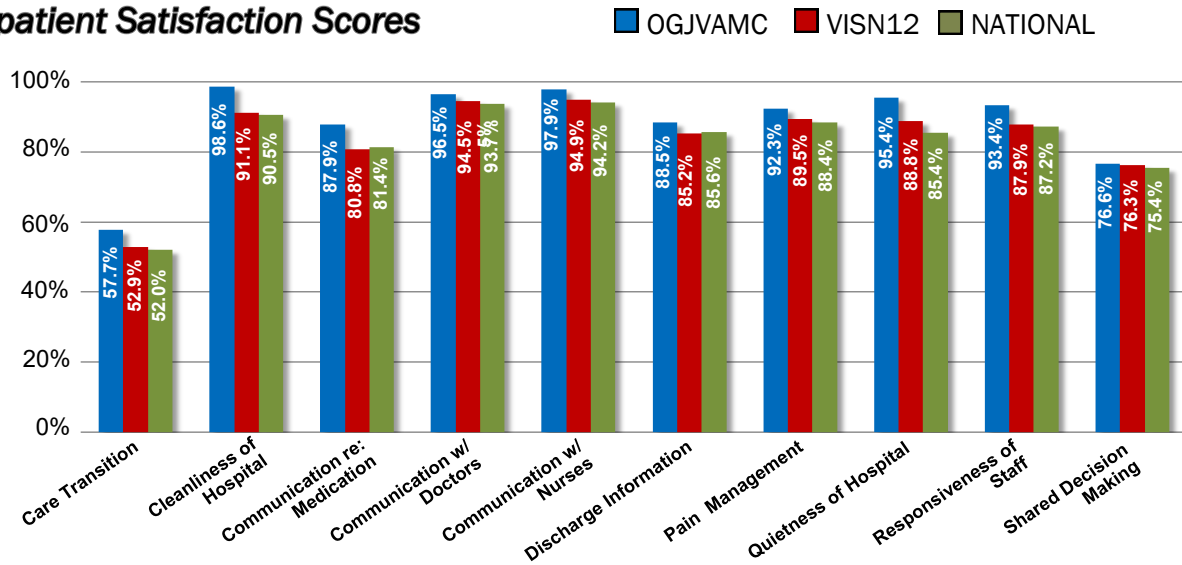
OGJVAMC's Pathology and Laboratory Service received accreditation from the College of American Pathologists (CAP), and is now one of more than 7,000 CAP-accredited facilities worldwide. The CAP Laboratory Accreditation Program is recognized as being equal to or more stringent than the U.S. government's own inspection program.

Accreditation from CARF International

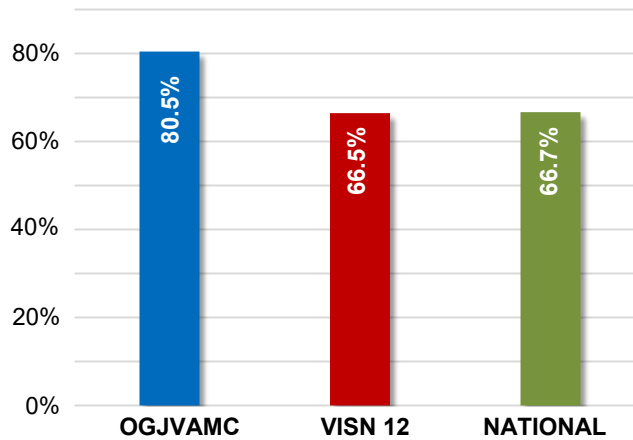
OGJVAMC's Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program received accreditation from CARF International, an independent nonprofit organization that accredits specialized services.

Our Patient Satisfaction in 2017

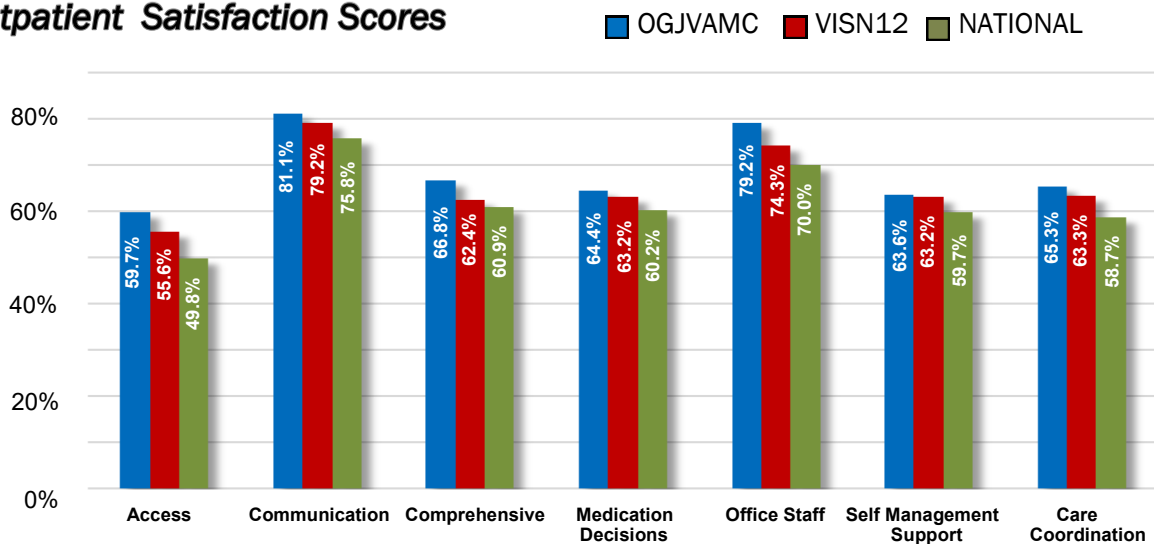
Inpatient Satisfaction Scores



Inpatient: Willingness to Recommend Hospital



Outpatient Satisfaction Scores



Increasing Access for Our Veterans

Increasing access to VA healthcare continued to be a priority of the Veterans Health Administration and OGJVAMC in 2017. Building upon its 2016 successes, OGJVAMC expanded its clinics that afford same day access and direct scheduling options. It also has authority to provide urgent mental health care for Veterans who have Other Than Honorable administrative discharges.

SAME DAY ACCESS

In 2016, OGJVAMC was recognized as one of the first 39 VA Medical Centers to achieve same day access for Primary Care followed shortly by providing same day access for mental health care for more urgent needs.

In 2017, same day access was expanded to include OGJVAMC's CPAP Clinic with daily walk-in hours. Previously, Audiology was the only clinic with walk-in hours for hearing aid education, maintenance, and other services (excluding hearing exams). There are plans to provide same day access for Orthotic Brace and Prosthetic Limb Assessments in 2018.

DIRECT SCHEDULING

In 2016, OGJVAMC began offering Veterans the ability to directly schedule routine audiology and optometry appointments without a referral from their primary care provider. This

change provided more timely care for these services and freed up primary care providers to see patients who need more than just a referral.

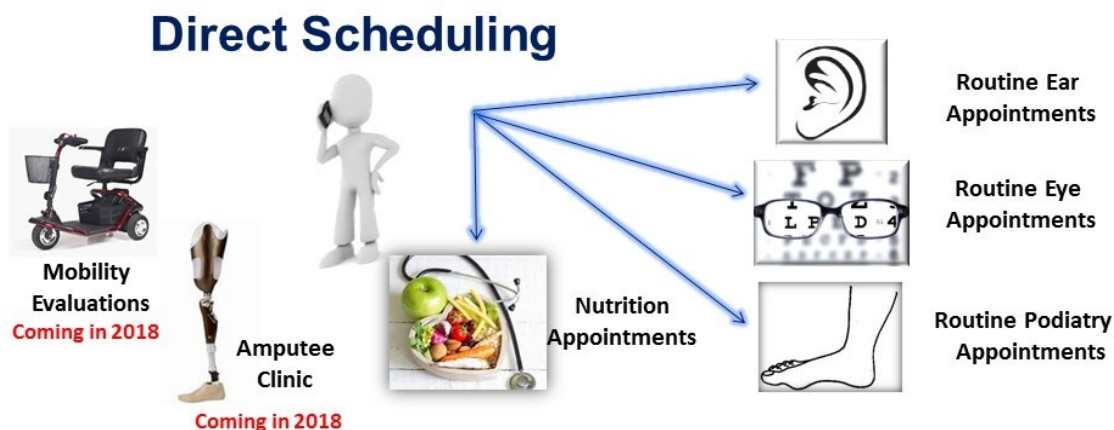
In 2017, OGJVAMC expanded direct scheduling to its Podiatry Clinic and Nutrition appointments. In 2018, this option will also be provided for the Amputee Clinic and Mobility Evaluations.

SERVICES FOR OTH VETERANS

In 2017 former VA Secretary David Shulkin expanded access for emergent mental health services to former service members with Other Than Honorable (OTH) administrative discharges, currently numbered at more than 500,000 nationwide. Typically these Veterans are not eligible for VA health care services.

Veterans with OTH discharges with emergent mental health needs may present to a VA Emergency Department or Urgent Care Clinic for evaluation and stabilization. Follow up care for their mental health emergency will be authorized within the VA system for that "episode of care" of up to 90 days, after which care in the community will be coordinated.

This initiative is about saving lives and part of the VA's larger Suicide Prevention Initiative (*see page 24*).



**Veterans interested in scheduling these clinical appointments
can now do so WITHOUT a Primary Care referral.**

Call 906-774-3300 ext 33115 to schedule today!

Telehealth Increasing Access to VA Care

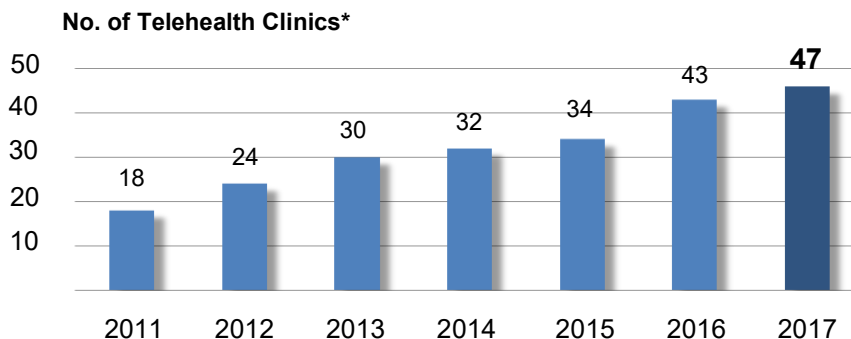
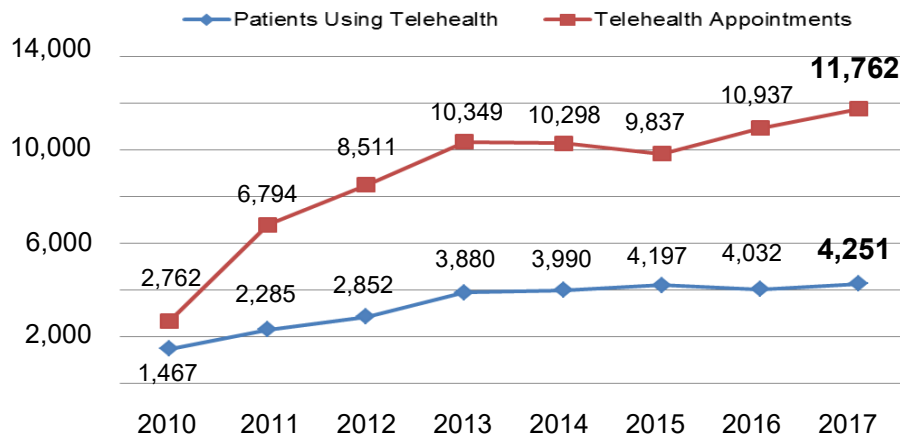
OGJVMC was the first VAMC in the nation to develop and use telehealth technology when, in 1996, pathologists in Milwaukee used microscopes to view specimens at the Iron Mountain facility.

OGJVMC has since expanded its use of state-of-the-art telehealth technologies to 47 primary and specialty care clinics to serve rural Veterans not close to a VA health care specialty provider. Telehealth services include Clinical Video Conferencing, Store and Forward, and Home Telehealth. In 2016, OGJVMC implemented its VA Video Connect Program, which allows Veterans to connect with their provider from the comfort of their home.



The benefits of telehealth appointments include increased access to specialty care not available locally and the reduced travel time and costs incurred by the Veteran. This is particularly helpful for working Veterans who would otherwise have to take vacation time to travel to a larger VA facility for care.

Telehealth does not replace face-to-face care but enhances the overall health care experience conveniently, efficiently, and cost effectively.



* Does not include Home Telehealth

47 Telehealth Clinics:

- Audiology
- Behavioral Health (Gen)
- Cardiac Device - Medtronic
- Cardiac Device - St. Jude
- Cardiology
- Cardio Arrhythmia
- Comp & Pension (MH)
- Dermatology
- Diabetes
- Diabetic Education
- Endocrinology
- Epilepsy
- Hematology
- Home Based Care
- Infectious Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Nutrition
- Occupational Health
- Pain University
- Pathology
- Peripheral Vascular Surgery
- Pharmacy
- Plastic Surgery
- Post-Op Surgery
- Pre-Natal
- Pre-Op Anesthesia
- Primary Care
- Prosthetics
- PT/OT DME Education
- Psychiatry
- PTSD
- Pulmonology
- Retinal Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Sleep Clinic
- Social Work
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Spirometry
- Substance Abuse
- Thoracic Surgery
- Transplant Care
- Urology
- VA Video Connect
- Weight Mgt - Individual
- Weight Mgt - Group

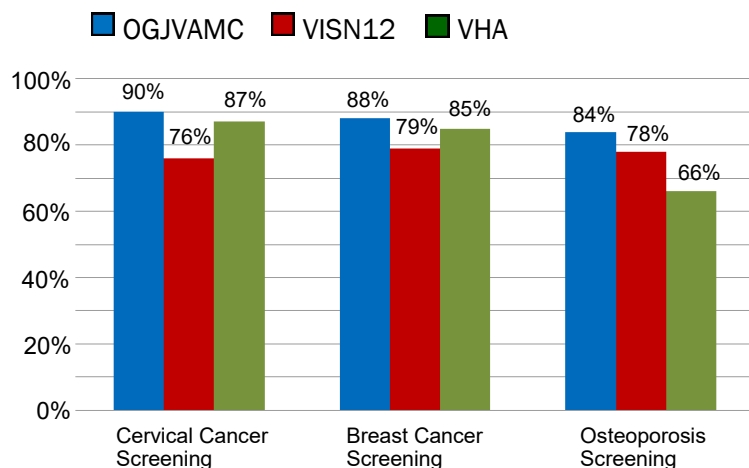
Health Care for Our Women Veterans

OGJVAMC offers clinically trained, gender specific health care providers to all female Veterans to ensure comprehensive care is available in a single visit. OGJVAMC has continued to enhance its women's health programs in 2017.

- Enrollment of female Veterans is increasing. In FY17 OGJVAMC provided care to 1,126 women Veterans.
- Primary care is offered from a trained and designated women's health provider. There are 19 designated women's health care providers throughout the Oscar G. Johnson VA Healthcare system.
- Many gender specific health campaigns are conducted throughout the year including breast cancer awareness, women's heart health awareness, women's history month, and cultural sensitivity campaigns.
- A full continuum of care for female Veterans includes comprehensive primary and specialty care, mental health services, disease prevention and screening, and urgent care.
- Enhanced maternity care coordination services are offered through our Maternity Care Coordinator.
- OGJVAMC's women's health services have continued to demonstrate excellence in clinical practices. This is evidenced by the External Peer Review Program (EPRP) clinical measures in cervical cancer, breast cancer, and osteoporosis screenings (see below).
- For more information on Women Veterans Healthcare: www.womenshealth.va.gov



Excellence in Clinic Practices for Women's Health Care Cervical Cancer, Breast Cancer, and Osteoporosis



A full continuum of care for female Veterans includes comprehensive primary and specialty care, mental health services, disease prevention and screenings, and urgent care.

She Has Served Too

The fastest growing population group in the military today is women who currently comprise 15 percent of active duty personnel and 18 percent of National Guard and Reserves.

Correspondingly, the face of VA health-care is changing. Younger female Veterans are using VA services more frequently, including for maternity care, and having service connected disabilities. Older Veterans are using VA services for menopausal needs, geriatric care, and extended inpatient stays. From 2000 to 2016, women Veterans using VA services have nearly tripled, from 159,000 to 450,000.

The VA provides a full continuum of care for women Veterans, including comprehensive gender-specific primary and specialty care, mental health services, disease prevention and screening, maternity care coordination, and urgent care services.



Enhanced maternity care is typically provided through arrangements made by the VA with local non-VA health providers. VA also provides maternity education and tools, child-birth preparation, breastfeeding support and lactation classes, breast pumps and other supplies, and care to the newborn for the first seven days after birth.

Women's health services provided by the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center have continued to excel in clinical practices and care for women Veterans (*see page 18*). OGJVAMC consistently screened 85 percent or more of its age appropriate women Veterans for breast and cervical cancers and osteoporosis. As the population of women Veterans grows, the number being treated for breast cancer continues to increase. When breast cancer is detected in its very early stage chances of a successful treatment are much higher.



Another enhancement to women Veterans healthcare is the establishment of the VA Women Veterans Call Center. The WVCC is staffed by women, many of whom are Veterans themselves, and provides a one-stop contact for getting information on benefits, eligibility, services, and resources specifically for women Veterans.

WVCC recently added an online, one-to-one anonymous chat function via real-time text messaging. It is accessible by visiting the Women Veterans Health Care web page at www.womenshealth.va.gov and clicking on the icon labeled "Chat with the Women Veterans Call Center."

The call center is available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 10 P.m. ET and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET.

From 2000 to 2016, women Veterans using VA services have nearly tripled, from 159,000 to 450,000.

New Clinic for CPAP Users

OGJVMC established a new CPAP Clinic in 2017 to offer Veterans suffering with sleep apnea help in adapting to their continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) equipment.

Sleep apnea is a common sleep disorder in which breathing is regularly interrupted for at least ten seconds, per the National Institute of Health and National Sleep Foundation. Sleep apnea can contribute to other health-related problems and disease processes, such as stroke, coronary heart disease, heart failure, irregular heartbeat, heart attack, and high blood pressure. It can also be responsible for excessive day time drowsiness resulting in poor or risky performance in daily activities. A CPAP machine is the most common treatment for sleep apnea.

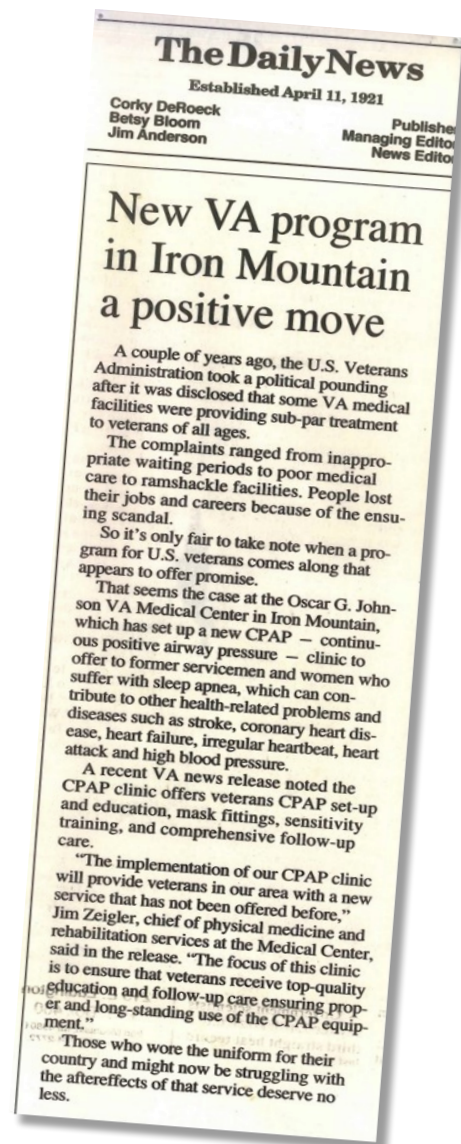
Up to 20 percent of Veterans have sleep apnea as compared to approximately five percent of the American population who also have the same diagnosis, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

The CPAP Clinic provides follow-up care after a sleep study is completed offering Veterans CPAP set up and education, mask fittings, sensitivity training, and comprehensive follow-up care. This will help raise Veterans' confidence and consistent use of CPAP.



Veterans may schedule an appointment or take advantage of walk-in hours Monday through Friday from 10:15 a.m. to noon and 2:15 to 4 p.m. for mask fittings, machine issues, or general questions. Veterans who are enrolled in VA care and interested in obtaining a sleep study should contact their Primary Care provider.

Veterans interested in using the CPAP clinic may call (906) 774-3300 (or toll free (800) 215-8262), extension 32739.



Up to 20 percent of Veterans have sleep apnea as compared to approximately five percent of the American population. . .

Honoring our Veterans in 2017



Memorial Day Ceremony



*Memorial Day
Tribute Ride*



*Patient
Memorial
Service*



POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony



*Green Bay
Packers Visit*



National Salute to Veterans Week



POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony

Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business

Suicide Prevention is VA's top clinical priority. Twenty Veterans on average die by suicide each day and only six were getting their healthcare through the VA. Three of the six were not receiving mental health care. This means that fourteen were not using VA healthcare services. VA cannot do it alone. Partnering with employees, Veterans, families, and community partners is a priority. VA is aggressively undertaking new measures to prevent suicide through its "Getting to Zero" initiative to include:

- **Expanding Veterans Crisis Line (VCL).** The 24/7 VCL provides immediate access to mental health crisis intervention and support through its hotline number or confidential chat or text functions (see below). VA also modified phone systems to allow for direct connection to the VCL by dialing "7" when calling a VA medical center.
- **Using Predictive Analytics to Identify Those at Risk and Intervene Early.** VA is using screening and assessment processes throughout the system in conjunction with predictive modeling to assist in identifying patients at risk for suicide.
- **Providing Mobile Apps to Help Veterans and their Families.** VA deployed a suite of 13 award-winning mobile apps to include: *PTSD Coach*, *CBT-I Coach* for insomnia, *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Coach*, *Mindfulness Coach*, and *Moving Forward*.
- **Telephone Coaching for Families of Veterans.** Coaching into Care (www.va.gov/coachingintocare) assists families and friends in helping a Veteran seek care.
- **Partnering with Stakeholders and the Community.** VA is working with private and public partners with the goal of ensuring that wherever a Veteran lives, he or she can access quality, timely mental health care. Locally, VA medical centers hosts annual Community Mental Health Summits (see page 23) and has a Community Mental Health point of contact to provide ready access to information and coordinate care.
- **Providing Urgent Mental Health Services for Veterans with Other than Honorable Discharges.** VA expanded access for emergent mental health services to former service members with Other Than Honorable (OTH) administrative discharges and normally not eligible for VA health care services (see page 16).
- **Proactive Outreach to Veterans Needing Care.** VA is working proactively to connect Veterans and their families with resources they need. VA's award-winning mental health awareness campaign, [Make the Connection](#), its [#BeThere](#) Suicide Prevention campaign, and Operation S.A.V.E. are critical to this effort.

20/6/3

20 Veterans complete suicide every day

6 of the 20 Veterans who complete suicide every day are seen at VA

3 of the 6 Veterans who are seen at VA are not receiving Mental Health Care



Confidential crisis chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to **838255**

OGJVAMC Hosts 5th Mental Health Summit

Forty-two people from twenty agencies and organizations attended OGJVAMC's fifth annual Mental Health Summit on August 29, 2017, in Marquette, Michigan.

The purpose for the annual summits is to bring together key stakeholders in the local community, including Veterans and their families, with the goal of enhancing access to mental health services and addressing the mental health care needs of Veterans and their family members, whether that is with the VA or in the community.

"The goal for us is to continue to build collaboration so that wherever our Veterans go, whether that is in the community or in the VA, we know what services are available and we can provide those," said Barbara



Nelson-Thomas, Assistant Chief, Behavioral Health Service at OGJVAMC.

Key topics discussed included: Pain management at VA and in the community, VA's zero Suicide initiative, PTSD and substance abuse, legal issues, moral injury, tobacco cessation, and increasing access to mental health services.

News clips: [TV 10](#), [Mining Journal](#)

Reaching Out & Listening to Our Veterans

OGJVAMC continues to make outreach to Veterans throughout its large geographic area a priority. Working with local Veteran Service Officers, Veteran service organizations, and tribal and community representatives, OGJVAMC hosted and/or participated in 48 outreach events with over 3,800 people in attendance, including seven events at tribal nations. These events include health and benefit fairs, Veteran Town Halls, and community and Veteran-centric events.

A high priority for OGJVAMC's leadership is listening to Veterans. This makes Veteran Town Halls a key component of

the medical center's outreach program. In FY2017 OGJVAMC was very active in holding 28 Veteran Town Halls. This more than doubled its total number of town halls held since 2012, which is at 55 at the end of FY2017.



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Ending Veteran Homelessness

OGJVAMC's Homeless Prevention Program identified and served 265 Veterans in FY2017, increasing from the previous fiscal year. The program continues to work closely with community partners to provide a continuum of services including outreach, case management, providing information, and direct referral. The Homeless Prevention Program Team works closely and partners with community providers in working toward the goal of ending Veteran homelessness utilizing a "no wrong door" approach. The Homeless Prevention Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Housing Assistance

The Homeless Prevention Program works in partnership with Great Lakes Recovery Center, Inc. to provide Contract Emergency Residential Services (CERS) in Marquette and Sault Ste. Marie. The CERS program contracts to provide transitional housing for homeless Veterans. Veterans participating in CERS work to address concerns and issues which led to homelessness and to identify and work toward options for independent living in the community.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) jointly manage the HUD-VA Supported Housing program. The program was created to serve chronically homeless Veterans who are in recovery from mental health or substance use disorders and need assistance to maintain inde-

pendent housing in the community. During FY2017, the OGJVAMC HUD-VASH Program served 31 Veteran families in Michigan and five in Wisconsin.

National Veteran Homeless Call Center

The VA established the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans Hotline to ensure that homeless Veterans or Veterans at-risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors.

OGJVAMC's Homeless Prevention Program Team successfully addressed 35 crisis calls to the National Veteran Homeless Call Center during FY2017

Homeless or at risk Veterans can call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at: 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838).

For more information on VA's Homeless Prevention Program: www.va.gov/homeless

www.ironmountain.va.gov/services/homeless

2017 Homeless or At Risk Veterans

- **265** Veterans served
- **4** Veterans used Contract Emergency Residential Services (CERS)
- **36** formerly homeless Veterans and their families used HUD-VASH vouchers.
- **35** Veterans called the National Veteran Homeless Call Center

OGJVAMC's Homeless Prevention team served 242 Veterans in FY2017. . . . and successfully addressed 26 crisis calls to the National Veteran Homeless Call Center.

Students Learn About VA Careers

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center in Iron Mountain, MI, hosted 265 high school juniors and seniors from eight area high schools and home school programs for its sixth annual VA Career Day on January 31, 2017. The VA Career Day event provides local students the opportunity to get a first-hand look, and in many cases hands on experience, of the various careers at a VA health care facility.

Students were able to browse up to 34 career booths and talk with VA employees eager to discuss their careers. Students were exposed to a wide variety of clinical and non-clinical professions ranging from nursing, physician, social work, and rehabilitation medicine to engineering, finance, law enforcement, and supply management.

"I was very impressed with the number and variety of careers here," said Amy Brackett, Business Education teacher for the Pembine-Beecher-Dunbar Schools.

At some of the career booths, students were able to participate in hands-on demonstrations. At the Surgical Services booth students were able to prep a mannequin for sur-



gery and try out their hand at using surgical tools such as surgical staples and scalpels. Students interested in a respiratory career took turns inserting a tube down the airway of a computerized mannequin and at the audiology booth students could check out state-of-the-art hearing aids.

"Many of our students are not sure of what they would like to pursue as a career," said Harold Payne, a guidance counselor at Forest Park High School.

"This is a great opportunity to see firsthand a number of different professions," Payne added.

The number of schools participating in OGJVMC's VA Career Day has grown exponentially over the last five years, with seven area schools participating this year.

Seven area high schools participated in this year's VA Career Day: Iron Mountain, Kingsford, North Dickinson, Forest Park, Pembine-Beecher-Dunbar, Niagara, and Florence.

See more photos on our Facebook album or [click here!](#)



"This is a great opportunity to see firsthand a number of different professions."

~ Harold Payne, High School Guidance Counselor

OGJVAMC By The Numbers in 2017

Health Care Provided



20,506*
Veterans Served



214,978*
Outpatient Visits



5,929
Urgent Care Visits



1,718
Surgical Procedures



36,665
Mental Health
Outpatient Visits



904
Inpatient Stays



15,288
Bed Days of Care



42
Average Daily Census



914,526
Prescriptions Filled



551,405
Clinical Laboratory Tests

Workforce

- ★ **694** Employees
- ★ **174** Nurses
- ★ **35** Physicians
- ★ **27** Social Workers
- ★ **28** Mid-level providers (DNPs, NPs, PAs)
- ★ **11** Licensed Psychologists
- ★ **10** Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Providers (PTs, OTs, SLPs, Chiropractor)
- ★ **7** Clinical Pharmacy Specialists
- ★ **2** Dentists
- ★ **2** Optometrists
- ★ **3** Audiologists

* Includes Community Outpatient/Rural Outreach Clinics

Dollars Spent*

\$156.9M Operating Budget
\$ 8.4M Construction Funds
\$ 0.2M Rural Health Funds

Operating Beds

57

Total
Beds

17

4East
Med/Surg

40

Community
Living Center

Demographics

25,864
Square Miles

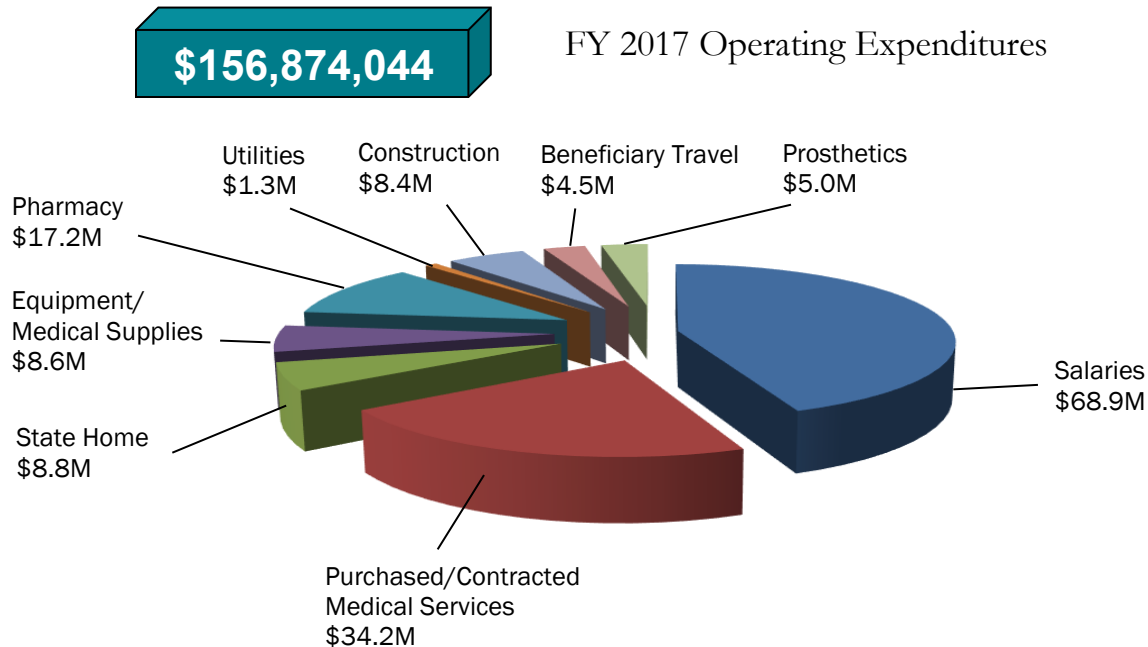
25 Counties
Served

96.3% Rural /
Highly Rural
Veterans *

* Most Rural VAMC in
the Nation

Our Financial Expenditures

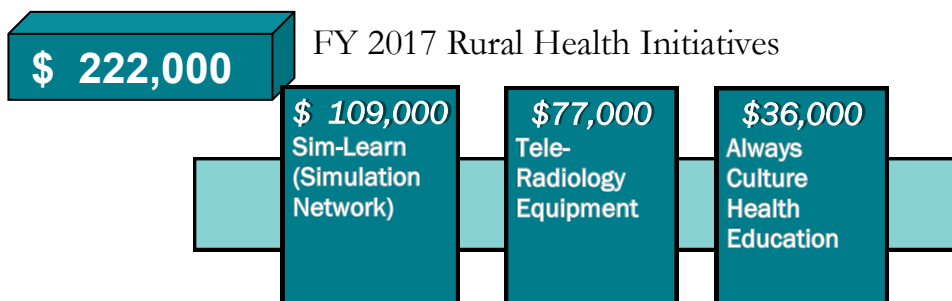
Operating Expenditures



Construction Expenditures



Rural Health Expenditures



Our Construction Projects

The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is committed to being a state-of-the-art facility to provide our Veterans the best care possible. From 2011 to 2017 OGJVAMC expended \$47 million in construction to provide upgrades and renovations to the clinical and administrative spaces including primary care, specialty care, surgical, dental, urgent care, imaging, prosthetics, and physical therapy.

In FY 2017, OGJVAMC completed the new Veterans Canteen Service cafeteria and store as well as a new kitchen that prepares inpatient meals. OGJVAMC also renovated 5 West floor for administrative offices and remodeled hallways in the main first floor and basement hallways.

In FY 2018, completion of the Medical



Center's Whole Health Clinic, which will include massage and chiropractic therapy, Whole Health Coaches, and healthy living classes and activities such as Tai Chi. In FY 2019, OGJVAMC will be moving forward with expansion of the Community Living Center.



The Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center is committed to being a state-of-the-art facility to provide Veterans the best care possible.

Did You Know?



OGJVAMC has consistently been rated as 1 of 8 VA hospitals in the top 10 percent of all VA hospitals in patient satisfaction since 2012.



VA is the nation's largest healthcare system with over 11 million Veterans enrolled and serving over 6 million each year.



OGJVAMC has one of the largest patient service areas east of the Mississippi River serving 20,000 Veterans in 24 counties covering over 25,800 square miles.



VA researchers have won 3 Nobel Prizes and 6 Lasker Awards and made significant contributions to American medicine:

- *Conducted the first successful liver transplant;*
- *Developed the Artificial Kidney, Cardiac Pace-maker, Nicotine Patch, and cutting edge work in advanced prosthetics;*
- *Assisted in development of the Shingles Vaccine.*



OGJVAMC is the most rural VA Medical Center in the nation with 96.3 percent of Veterans it serves being identified as rural Veterans.



VA provides training to 70 percent of all U.S. doctors.



Thirty percent of OGJVAMC's 694 employees are Veterans.



Since 1999, 42 OGJVAMC clinical staff have received a total of \$698,956 in scholarships funded by the VA Employee Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP) to return to school and expand their knowledge.



Because **I CARE**, I will...

Integrity

Act with high morale principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

Commitment

Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

Advocacy

Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and beneficiaries.

Respect

Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

Excellence

Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

Oscar G. Johnson
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Office of Public Affairs
325 East H Street
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

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Extension 32001

Visit us online at www.ironmountain.va.gov and follow us on:



www.facebook.com/VAIronMountain

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